

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5425

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 2880

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SA, KS, KN

SUBJECT: MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS: SAUDI DELEGATION VIEWS ON NAC

REF: STATE 197960

(1) EMBOFF HELD LENGTHY DISCUSSION OF CONFERENCE PROSPECTS WITH HEAD OF SAUDI DELEGATION, AMBASSADOR MAMOUN KABBANI, AUGUST 10 AND 11. KABBANI REAFFIRMED SAUDI DISCONTENT WITH NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT AND OFFERED TO BE AS HELPFUL AS POSSIBLE ON ISSUES OF INTEREST.

(2) KABBANI IS PARTICULARLY AWARE OF SIGNIFICANCE OF NAC DISPUTE ON KOREAN QUESTION. HE RECALLED HE HAD FOUGHT VIGOROUSLY FOR ADMISSION OF ROK AT LIMA. HE SAID THAT WHEN KOREAN ITEM CAME UP FOR DISCUSSION HE WOULD RECALL HIS GOVERNMENT'S POSITION ON MEMBERSHIP QUESTION, ASSERT IMPORTANCE OF NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN GOVERNMENTS INVOLVED, AND ARGUE THAT PRESENCE OF FOREIGN TROOPS WAS INTERNAL MATTER OF SOUTH KOREAN GOVERNMENT. "WE WILL SEE IF ANYBODY ELSE SPEAKS UP," HE CONCLUDED. EMBOFF INFORMED KABBANI THAT US UNDERSTOOD NO ONE DELEGATION COULD STEM A PRO-LONGED TIDE BUT THAT MANY MEMBER GOVERNMENTS OF NAM HAD ASSURED US OF THEIR AGREEMENT WITH OUR ASSESSMENT OF KOREAN SITUATION AND WE HOPED THEY WOULD WORK TOGETHER TO EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS COLLECTIVELY AT THE CONFERENCE.

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(3) WITH REGARDS TO MIDDLE EAST QUESTIONS, KABBANI REGRETTED THAT HIS DELEGATION WOULD NOT BE IN A POSITION TO ARGUE AGAINST REFERENCES TO US IN DRAFT TEXTS. ON THE OTHER HAND, HE CONFIRMED OUR IMPRESSION THAT ISSUE OF EXPULSION OF ISRAEL WOULD BE NON-STARTER AT THE NAC. PRINCIPAL FACTOR KABBANI POINTED OUT WAS LACK OF UNITY AMONG THE ARAB MEMBERS. SHOULD THE ARABS COME TO AGREEMENT ON THIS POSITION, HOWEVER, THE NAC WOULD INEVITABLY ENDORSE IT, HE CONCLUDED.

4. KABBANI FELT LESS WELL INFORMED ABOUT PUERTO RICO AND PANAMA ISSUES AND EMBOFF REVIEWED THEM IN DETAIL AND LEFT WRITTEN MATERIAL. KABBANI, AS OTHERS HAVE COMMENTED, EXPECTS THAT LANGUAGE ON PUERTO RICO IS INEVITABLE AND SAID HE WILL SEEK TO PREVENT AMENDMENTS TO DRAFT POLITICAL DECLARATION WHICH GO BEYOND REFERENCE TO PUERTO RICO PEOPLE'S RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND INDEPENDENCE. ON PANAMA HE CONCLUDED THAT CONFERENCE WILL ADOPT WHATEVER LANGUAGE PANAMANIAN DELEGATION ASKS FOR, WITH WHICH EMBOFF CONCURRED WHILE EXPRESSING HOPE THAT ATMOSPHERE OF CONFERENCE WOULD NOT TURN RADICAL AND INFLUENCE PANAMANIAN DELEGATION TOWARD EXTREME FORMULATIONS.

5. KABBANI HIMSELF OFFERED AS SIGNIFICANT ISSUE BEFORE CONFERENCE PROPOSED CRITICISM OF CHILEAN GOVERNMENT. HE SAID HE WOULD MEET WITH VARIOUS OPPOSITION TO SUCH AN ATTEMPT ON THE GROUNDS THAT IT WAS INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF CHILE. SURPRISINGLY, KABBANI INQUIRED INTO BACKGROUND OF BELIZE QUESTION BUT DID NOT EXPRESS ANY PERSONAL VIEWS ON DISPUTE FOLLOWING EMBOFF'S DESCRIPTION OF IT.

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